

“(3) An employee for whom a waiver under this section is in effect shall not be considered an employee for purposes of subchapter III of chapter 83, or chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code.”

(c) REPORT ON USE OF ANNUITY LIMITATION WAIVER AUTHORITY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Government Reform of the House of Representatives a report on the exercise of the waiver authorities provided under section 824(g) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4064(g)), as amended by subsection (a), section 61 of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956, as added by subsection (b)(1), and section 625(j) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as added by subsection (b)(2). The report shall include the number and type of positions that have been filled under such waiver authority, and the retirement date, former job title, and new job title of each annuitant reemployed under such authority.

(d) HOME LEAVE PROVISIONS.—

(1) TRAVEL EXPENSES FOR REST AND RECOVERY TRAVEL.—Section 901(6) of the Foreign Service Act (22 U.S.C. 4081(6)) is amended by striking “unbroken by home leave” each place it appears.

(2) AUTHORITY TO REQUIRE LEAVES OF ABSENCE.—Section 903(a) of the Foreign Service Act (22 U.S.C. 4083) is amended by striking “18 months” and inserting “12 months”.

(e) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ACCOMMODATION AND SUBSISTENCE TO INDIVIDUALS SERVING IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN.—The Secretary of State may provide during any fiscal year, with or without reimbursement, accommodation and subsistence to personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan for whom the Chief of Mission is responsible.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment? If not, the question is on agreeing to amendment No. 3597.

The amendment (No. 3597) was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3661, AS MODIFIED

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3661 on behalf of Senator LEAHY regarding notification requirements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. COCHRAN], for Mr. LEAHY, proposes an amendment numbered 3661.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for notification to the Committees on Appropriations)

On page 121, line 5, after the colon, insert the following: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading shall be subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations:

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I send a modification to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: To provide for notification to the Committees on Appropriations)

On page 121, line 5, after the colon, insert the following: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading in this Act shall be subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations:

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment, as modified, was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 3663, AS MODIFIED

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 3663 on behalf of Senator LEAHY regarding a technical correction.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendment.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Mississippi [Mr. COCHRAN], for Mr. LEAHY, proposes an amendment numbered 3663.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: Technical amendment)

On page 121, line 1, strike “in Iran” and insert in lieu thereof:

of which \$34,750,000 shall be made available to promote democracy in Iran and of which \$5,000,000 shall be made available for election assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On page 121, line 2, after “heading” insert “for assistance for Iran”

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I send a modification to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the amendment is so modified.

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

(Purpose: Technical amendment)

On page 120, line 25, strike “for programs and activities promoting democracy in Iran” and insert in lieu thereof:

of which \$34,750,000 shall be made available for programs and activities promoting democracy in Iran and of which \$5,000,000 shall be made available for election assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

On page 121, line 4, strike “and” and insert in lieu thereof: , and those funds made available to promote democracy in Iran

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment, as modified?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment, as modified.

The amendment (No. 3663), as modified, was agreed to.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized to speak as if in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STRATEGY IN IRAQ

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, as we reflect on the Presidency of George W. Bush, there were moments of high drama. Certainly, the moment of highest drama in my recollection was when the President visited the site of the 9/11 attack. When he went to New York and walked through the smoke-filled rubble with the firefighters and the workmen still digging through, it was a moment that I am sure will endure. It will be remembered.

If you had to then select another moment in his Presidency that will be remembered, it was a moment 3 years ago today when the President of the United States boarded a Naval fighter plane and flew to land on the deck of USS *Abraham Lincoln*.

It was a time when America wasn't certain about what had happened in Iraq. We had launched an invasion. Saddam Hussein had been deposed. There were still a lot of questions about the future of Iraq and what would happen in that country.

The President of the United States came to that aircraft carrier on that day, and as he landed and spoke to those who were assembled, behind him was a banner which read “Mission Accomplished.” It was on May 1, 2003, 3 years ago. The President said on that day:

In the battle of Iraq, the United States and our allies have prevailed. And now our coalition is engaged in securing and restructuring that country.

The President went on to say:

We have difficult work to do in Iraq. We're bringing order to parts of that country that remain dangerous. We're pursuing and finding leaders of the old regime, who will be held to account for their crimes. We've begun the search for hidden chemical and biological weapons and already know of hundreds of sites that will be investigated. We're helping to build Iraq, where the dictator built palaces for himself instead of hospitals and schools. And we will stand with the new leaders of Iraq as they establish a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people.

The President went on to say 3 years ago:

From Pakistan to the Philippines to the Horn of Africa, we are hunting down al-Qaida killers. Nineteen months ago, I pledged that the terrorists would not escape the patient justice of the United States. And as of tonight, nearly one-half of al-Qaida's senior operatives have been captured or killed.

That was the speech of the President of the United States 3 years ago today.

Since the President made that speech, this is the grim record. Since that day, over the last 3 years, 2,262 Americans have been killed and 17,202 Americans have been wounded.

This occurred after the President announced to the world that our mission was accomplished.

As we gather today to mark the third anniversary of that Presidential statement, war continues with no end in sight, and 2,401 of our best and bravest soldiers have given their lives. I have called many of those families from Illinois. I have attended some of the funerals. I know the lives of those families will never be the same. They have given so much to this country. We thank them. We will continue to thank them over and over again. We thank the men and women in uniform for continuing to stand and fight to defend this country and its values. They represent the very best. We should never forget that.

But we now know that within their ranks—even at the highest levels—there have been serious concerns about this administration and its strategy in Iraq.

Three years after President Bush's statement on that carrier that our mission was accomplished, several leading generals, men who served under the President at that time, men under his command, men who were responsible for the lives of thousands of soldiers and marines, now retired, in civilian status, have stepped forward. What have they said?

Retired LTG Gregory Newbold, the three-star Marine Corps general who served as the Nation's top operations officer before the invasion of Iraq, recently joined a number of his former colleagues and said:

I am driven to action now by the missteps and misjudgments of the White House and the Pentagon, and by my many painful visits to our military hospitals. In those places, I have been both inspired and shaken by the broken bodies but unbroken spirits of soldiers, Marines and corpsmen returning from this war. The cost of flawed leadership continues to be paid in blood. The willingness of our forces to shoulder such a load should make it a sacred obligation for civilian and military leaders to get our defense policy right. They must be absolutely sure that the commitment is for a cause as honorable as the sacrifice.

General Newbold continued:

My sincere view is that the commitment of our forces to this fight was done with the casualness and a swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions—or bury the results.

Finally, the general said:

We need fresh ideas and fresh faces. That means, as a first step, replacing Rumsfeld

and many others unwilling to fundamentally change their approach. The troops in the Middle East have performed their duty. Now we need people in Washington who can construct a unified strategy worthy of them. It is time to send a signal to our Nation, our forces and the world that we are uncompromising on our security but are prepared to rethink how we achieve it.

General Newbold is joined in this call for change by GEN Anthony Zinni; MG Paul D. Eaton; MG John Batiste; MG Charles Swannack, Jr.; and MG John Riggs, all retired.

If you look at the résumés of these men, you will find the very best in service to our country. General Eaton, who headed up training for the Iraqi military from 2003 to 2004—what did he say? I quote him:

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is not competent to lead America's Armed Forces.

General Swannack, former commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, one of the most storied and honored divisions in American military history—here is what he said:

I do not believe Secretary Rumsfeld is the right person to fight that war based on his absolute failures in managing the war against Saddam in Iraq.

These generals are calling for change at the highest level. How many times during the course of this war when the President was questioned about his military strategy did he say: I defer to the generals; I defer to the military professionals. This will not be a political decision.

That is the right response. But what would he now say when these six men, many of whom served under his command, have stepped forward and said that the plan for this war is so wrong and that the man executing that plan as Secretary of Defense is not the right person for that job?

I have said publicly, and I will repeat it. I believe Secretary Rumsfeld, for the good of this Nation, should leave as Secretary of Defense. I believe this for the same reason these generals do. I do not believe he can lead us to the right conclusion in Iraq, and we will pay a heavy price if we do not acknowledge that.

As General Zinni has said, staying the course in Iraq sends us right over Niagara Falls. We have to change the course. We have to understand why change is imperative. It is worth taking a few minutes to understand how we have reached this point some 3 years after President Bush told the world our mission was accomplished.

Recently, Secretary of State Rice stated the United States has made thousands of "tactical errors." Secretary Rumsfeld challenged her, and said: "I don't know what she is talking about."

She was right. The administration has made numerous and tragically costly mistakes in Iraq. Think about it. The decision to invade without allies—with only the United Kingdom as a major force by our side, and many other countries sending smaller forces, we went in virtually alone. It was a

strategic misjudgment that has left us today carrying the military and financial burdens in Iraq.

Before us on the floor of the Senate is another spending bill for Iraq—this one over \$100 billion. The total no one can guess, but \$320 billion so far, more than \$2 billion a week.

My situation is like some in the Senate. I voted against the use-of-force resolution for the war in Iraq—23 of us did, 1 Republican and 22 Democrats on that October night in 2002. But I said from my memory of what happened in Vietnam, as I tried my best to appreciate what our soldiers faced, that I would vote for every penny that this President asked for to wage this war so that the soldiers would always have what they needed to win and come home safely. And I have done that. I will continue to do that.

When my critics ask: How can you be against the war and vote to fund it? The question comes down to something very basic from where I am standing. If it were my son or daughter serving in uniform in that country, I would want them to have everything to come home safely, even if I bitterly disagreed with the administration's policy that sent them into this war.

We have 132,000 soldiers in Iraq today. Our combined allies have 24,000, some of whom are in Kuwait. Mr. President, 2,401 Americans have died. That is more than 10 times the losses that have been suffered by the rest of the so-called Coalition of the Willing.

This record-setting supplemental bill that we take up this week in the Senate will bring the cost of U.S. operations in Iraq to \$280 billion. For now, as I have said: I am going to vote for it. But before this Congress continues to fund, we have to ask hard questions.

If this is going to be a routine vote for the so-called emergency supplemental bill, if this is going to be routine to the point where we don't even question the policies and strategies of the war that we are voting for, then we have failed in our responsibilities as Senators.

On February 25, 2003, the Army Chief of Staff, GEN Eric Shinseki, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

General Shinseki stated, in an invasion of Iraq, that "any postwar occupying force would have to be big enough to maintain safety in a country with ethnic tensions that could lead to other problems."

General Shinseki was asked how many troops are needed, and he said:

Something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers.

He also said:

Assistance from friend and allies would be helpful.

General Shinseki did not get the 300,000 or 400,000 troops that he and many others thought would be needed nor did we get the allies. General Shinseki, for his candor and honesty, was replaced in his command. This administration was not about to stand

still for someone in uniform telling them the stark, honest truth, that without enough soldiers the ones we sent would be in danger.

And just as Economic Adviser Larry Lindsay was fired for predicting the war would cost \$100 to \$200 billion at a time the administration said it might not cost anything because Iraqi oil would pay for it. That was Mr. Wolfowitz who made that statement. The fact is, they were right, the critics were wrong, and we have suffered as a result.

There was a failure by the leaders in our Government to see this insurgency that came about in Iraq, that endangered our soldiers and destabilized that country for so long.

When Secretary Rumsfeld was asked about the reaction of the insurgents and the uncertainty on the ground, he said:

Freedom's untidy.

In fact, the looting was the start of the postinvasion violence that has claimed 94 percent of the American lives lost in Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld also signed off on another critical strategic misjudgment. The decision after the invasion to immediately disband the Iraqi Army made it easier for the insurgency.

We remember what happened when the Secretary went to Iraq in a surprise visit. Soldiers greeted him. He took questions. The Tennessee guardsman asked: Mr. Secretary, why do I have to dig through the dump to find pieces of metal to put in my humvee to protect me and my fellow soldiers? Why don't we have modern equipment to protect us on the ground? The Secretary was at a loss for words. He was embarrassed. America should have been embarrassed to send our soldiers into battle without the equipment they needed.

Since the beginning of the war, a troubling pattern has emerged. Under Mr. Rumsfeld's leadership, the Pentagon has been very slow to respond to the needs of our troops in the field.

In December 2003, LTG Ricardo Sanchez identified critical shortages and protective equipment for our troops and lack of spare parts for combat equipment, providing proof our soldiers were not adequately supplied.

By mid-2004, a furor broke out when reports reached Washington, DC, that many humvee vehicles in Iraq did not have armor, and American soldiers and Marines using them were being maimed and killed by IEDs as a result.

Congress flooded Defense budgets with funding for vehicle armor to replace or improve inadequately protected vehicles. Even after news coverage of this lack of planning forced Secretary Rumsfeld to accelerate production of the armor, the Pentagon missed at least three self-imposed deadlines to fully field armor all of our troops—this after the President told us our mission had been accomplished.

A defining moment for Secretary Rumsfeld was when that Tennessee

guardsman challenged him. Here is what the guardsman asked:

Why do we soldiers have to dig through local landfills for pieces of scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass to uparmor our vehicles?

Secretary Rumsfeld replied, in part:

You have to go to war with the Army you have, not the Army you want.

That is our Secretary of Defense, speaking of the Army he had, not the Army he wanted.

Let me remind everyone the decision to invade was the decision of the United States of America. We picked the date. We picked the time. We established when readiness would be adequate. And sadly, it was not.

That conversation with the guardsman from Tennessee revealed another destructive tendency. Secretary Rumsfeld has seemingly forgotten about the tremendous role our Guard and Reserve have played in this war and must be prepared to play at home. The condition of the gear and equipment from our Guard and Reserve continues to rapidly deteriorate.

Last week, I went to the Illinois National Guard Camp Lincoln in Springfield, meeting with the officers and asking them about equipment. Eighty percent of their men and women and units have been activated in Iraq. They have left behind wornout, damaged, and destroyed equipment, obviously, came back empty-handed, and now do not have the fundamental equipment they need to train the guardsman to be able to respond to domestic emergencies in my home State of Illinois. Our situation is not unique. Across the United States, Guard and Reserve have only 34 percent of the equipment they need in the United States.

The true cost of this war is not just in the lives and the injuries and the budgets but the fact that we have left our military, our Guard and Reserve, ill equipped, unprepared, for the next challenge. That is a sad condemnation of an administration that did not think through this commitment, that did not understand that mission would not truly be accomplished for years and years after the President made that claim.

As a result of "going to war with the Army you have," and inadequate logistical plans, our Army and Marine units on the ground in Iraq are continuing to struggle with repairing, rebuilding, and replacing equipment used by up to 3 years of sustained effort.

In testimony before Congress last year, U.S. Army GEN Richard Cody, the vice chief of staff of the Army, stated:

We are equip-stretched, let there no doubt about it . . . This Army started this war not fully equipped.

What excuse is there for that, that we sent our Army, our Marines, all of the men and women in uniform, over to this war without the proper equipment?

The failures on the part of the Secretary of Defense to bring a large

enough occupation force to ensure the force was properly equipped or to plan for the emergency of full-scale insurgency against United States represents strategic errors of great significance. The strategic blindness continues today.

As I said, at least Secretary Rice acknowledges errors were made. When asked about her statement, Secretary Rumsfeld said:

I don't know what she was talking about, to be perfectly honest.

After 3 years of war, Secretary Rumsfeld does not know what the Secretary of State is talking about when she says that thousands of mistakes were made.

We need someone who can recognize the reality before him and acknowledge that we need to change course in Iraq.

Last fall, the Senate, by a vote of 79 to 19, declared calendar year 2006 should be a period of significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with Iraqi security forces taking the lead for the security of a free and sovereign Iraq, thereby creating the conditions for the phased redeployment of U.S. forces.

What does that mean? It is time for the Iraqis to stand and govern their own nation. It is time for the Iraqi people to stand and defend their own nation. How many years have we been promised that Iraqi soldiers and police were this close to replacing American soldiers? You have a right to be skeptical because we have yet to see the first American soldier replaced by an Iraqi soldier taking their place, standing guard for their own country.

Secretary Rumsfeld has not been able to create the conditions that will allow for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. We are a long way from accomplishing our mission.

Early this month, Congress received the first report from the Bush administration required by the year of transition amendment. The administration report offers the same ideological blind spots that led to the "mission accomplished" claim in 2003. It shows the same lack of vision that failed to predict insurgency. There are no mentions of militia. There is no analysis of the dangers of civil war. They still see only what they want to see.

I believe Secretary Rumsfeld should resign. But I in no way hold him solely responsible for the decisions on Iraq. After all, he works for the Commander in Chief, the President of the United States.

In order to find our way out of this disastrous mess this administration has made in Iraq, the President clearly needs new leadership in Defense. And that is not just my opinion. It is the opinion of these retired generals—men who have given their lives to this country, men whose hearts were broken as they watched their soldiers and marines killed in battle, men who visited these veterans in the hospitals, men who reflected on where we are today

and how we reached it and came to the same conclusion.

We need a new direction. We need new leadership. We need to have someone in the Department of Defense and a strategy that will lead to our troops coming home, the sooner the better.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DARFUR

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, we will be closing in a few moments. But before doing that, I want to comment on events carried out in Washington yesterday, indeed around the country yesterday, in response to a crisis that is going on, a crisis that is more than a crisis. It is genocide going on in the Darfur region. It is the western region of the Sudan.

Yesterday, roughly 10,000 people gathered in front of the Capitol, on the Mall, to bring attention to what is happening: that crisis, that genocidal campaign that is underway and being perpetrated against the people of Darfur.

I applaud all of the participants' compassion and commitment to the cause which has been discussed again and again on the floor of the Senate but, indeed, is a devastating crisis that is destroying a population and, indeed, is genocide.

This is an issue that is very close to my own heart, in part because I travel just about every year to do medical mission work in that part of the world, in the Sudan. Indeed, I was in the Darfur area and in Chad a little over a year ago on the ground.

I mention it because this afternoon, several hours ago, I had the wonderful opportunity of meeting with a small group of refugees from the Darfur region. The meeting was organized by SaveDarfur.org. It gave me the opportunity to visit firsthand with individuals from several of the tribes that occupy the Darfur region.

It is interesting, there are 10, 11, 12 tribes throughout Sudan. In the south, two or three tribes dominate. In different parts of the Sudan, tribes dominate. But it is interesting, over in the Darfur region, the number of tribes that intersect together. It is sort of midway—north-south—in Sudan, so you have a lot of the tribes that are more endemic to the northern part of Sudan, as well as the southern and eastern part of Sudan. All of them commingle in that region.

We met, oh, about 50 yards from here on a balcony overlooking the Mall. And as you stood on the balcony there, on a beautiful day in Washington, looking out, you could not help but think of

the contrast between what is going on in the homeland of those refugees to the United States from Darfur and that beautiful day looking out upon our monuments and the freedom and liberty for which they stand. That contrast between the turmoil that is going on, as we speak, in Sudan and America's homeland peace and prosperity were really felt.

I have had the opportunity to go to Sudan a number of times. I have talked to the refugees in the border camps. They are along the western border of Sudan and in the country of Chad, which is to the west of the Sudan. There are 12 refugee camps. The refugee camps have anywhere from 8,000 to 20,000 people who are living on a sustenance level, with the aid of NGOs and peoples around the world, in little tents, makeshift tents, but living there, in essence, permanently.

There are about 2 million people who have been displaced in the Darfur region and about 200,000 people who have died as a result of brutality which leads back to government sponsorship.

We have heard again and again the stories and seen pictures of the villages that are set afire, of the women who are raped, the children who are abducted, recruited to armies, and even many executed.

The Government of Sudan has failed to take credible steps to date, and we need to use everything within our power and our standing in the international community to convince other people to act and to act now. We cannot—cannot—tolerate this genocide.

On this floor we have called it for what it is: genocide. President Bush has called it genocide. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell has called it genocide.

Last month, before we left for the Easter/Passover recess, I met with a number of friends from Sudan, many of whom I had gotten to know when I was last in Sudan, in the southern part of the Sudan. They had been sponsored by a charity out of Knoxville, TN.

We talked about the clinics and the hospitals in southern Sudan. And we discussed the pressure the American Government has been able to bring to date on behalf of the Darfur people. But there is a lot more we can do. And there is a lot more we should do.

Because these individuals were from the southern part of Sudan—that is a thousand miles away, a long way away from the Darfur region—they reflected how our Government getting involved in the southern part of Sudan had brought more peace, and it stopped the civil war that had gone on there for the last 20 years.

One of those visitors, Reverend Kayanga, is a friend, actually, somebody whom I have gotten to know. He said it best when he said, "The only people that visited us were your people." He was saying that to me, again, reaching out: Thank you for the past. But you need to get even more involved as we address this devastating crisis in the Darfur part of Sudan.

The conflict in the region is huge. First of all, Sudan itself, the country, is about a third of the size of the continental United States. The Darfur region is vast. The area of conflict is probably a third bigger than all of Iraq. So it is a huge area, which is one of the challenges. Things are getting worse, not better, which is the message they were giving me. Indeed, as I talked to people on the ground, in terms of NGOs, the NGOs are having a harder time. The rainy season comes in 4 weeks. Once that comes in, there is no way to get aid and have it distributed throughout the Darfur region.

As yesterday's rally demonstrated, the American people have vast stores of compassion and caring for these people and for the suffering of others. We have a passionate commitment to human rights. Now is the time for us to reflect it. At our Government's request, the African Union has agreed to extend the ongoing peace talks until midnight on Tuesday. Indeed, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick will leave today for Abuja, Nigeria, to help both parties resolve the crisis. Negotiations have gone on for 2 years, and a settlement is long past due. Those who are responsible for this genocide, for the war crimes against humanity and criminal acts, need to be brought to justice. No longer can we wait this tragedy out. We must act, and the international community must be encouraged to step up as well. Hundreds of thousands of lives are at stake.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. FRIST. I am happy to.

Mr. REID. Just out of curiosity, I know on some of your trips you have taken to care for the poor in these countries, you have done a lot of surgery and other things. Have you done any in this area?

Mr. FRIST. In the Darfur region I have not. But it is very similar to southern Sudan. It is fascinating, southern Sudan, where 2 million people have been displaced, and 5 million people have been killed in a civil war there, and it started there. That is why I have great hope. A lot of people just give up on these regions, because when we went there initially, it was almost exactly the same. There was a lot of fighting within 10 or 15 kilometers.

I started operating in a little schoolhouse that had been diverted for about 8 years. That was 1997–1998. Now in 2006, there is a village there and commerce and a hospital, no fighting; 50,000 people go through what was a schoolhouse and is now a big hospital.

When people give up in Africa or say we have been through this before and talk about corruption in government, we can't give up. We should not give up.

I very much appreciate my distinguished colleague asking because there is a lot we can do. And it starts with the compassion and caring that the American people exemplify. Now is the time for us to act.